

mind can be taught to hold the instability with some measure of equanimity, a new kind of happiness reveals itself.

Because of his unvarying emphasis on *dukkha*, the Buddha's teachings were often taken to be pessimistic, as if he were still a practicing ascetic. But he was not. As Upaka recognized but could not embrace, Buddha rejected the cultivation of painful states. But he always claimed that, like a doctor, he had to be realistic. One can of course deceive with false consolation, denying the illness; or one may exaggerate the malady to give up hope completely. But such a physician



the prisons of  
culture. Today  
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are right  
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vulnerability of the

who hurt them  
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much less extre

...who cling, like my patient Monica, to the masts of their securities, who are caught in one way or another by their negative feelings, bear close resemblance to the

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cetics of the Buddha's time. Like his old friend Upaka, they have a very hard time seeing past their ingrained versions of reality, driven as they are by self-condemnation. As the comedian Louis C.K. has put it, in a contemporary twist on the Buddha's teachings, "Everything's amazing, and nobody's happy."

Therapists today, building on detailed observations of the infant-parent relationship, now have a way to explain this ascetic strain in the contemporary psyche. Their model, of “developmental trauma,” is based on the realization that “there is no such thing as an infant”<sup>6</sup>; there is only a mother-child relationship. Infants are too dependent to be called persons in their own right—they survive only because their parents give themselves over to their care. This “relational” paradigm sees unbearable emotion as the determining factor in trauma. Intense feelings are present in a baby from birth. They take many forms—an infant’s ruthless mix of appetite, need, and distress is well-known to any parent—and it is the parent’s gut response to engage these rudimentary emotions and try to make them bearable, or barely tolerable, for their child. When this does not happen adequately, when the painful emotions or unpleasant feelings are not picked up and handled by the parents, the parent, or child, is left with overwhelming feelings he or she is not equipped to deal with, feelings that often get worked into self-hatred.

this week  
 @  
 CAVD

My father had a lot of this. One of his patients gave me after hearing  
 comes from a children's book one of his patients gave me after hearing  
 me talk about this. The book is called *What's Wrong, Little Pookie?*<sup>27</sup>  
 and in it a mother can be heard talking her child about what is  
 bothering him. She goes through a series of hypothetical questions  
 (Are you hungry? Are you tired?) that become increasingly absurd  
 and a very good attempt to help you understand what Little Pookie  
 has to say for both why he was so upset and how to help him.

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Maria Montessori wrote about this in her book on child development comes from a children's book one of my patients gave me after hearing me talk about this. The book is called *What's Wrong, Little Pookie?* and in it a mother can be heard talking to her child about what is bothering him. She goes through a series of hypothetical questions (Are you hungry? Are you tired?) that become increasingly absurd and a very good example to try to help you understand Little Pookie has a compulsion for getting the why he was so upset in the first place. It is a

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10/12- 10/16



**MON**

10 / 12

Bilingual Storytime  
with Ms. Jasmin



**WED**

10 / 14

Storytime with Ms. Jo



**THURS**

10 / 15

S.T.E.A.M: Screaming Ghosts





**TUES**  
10/13

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